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1st degree masonic ritual pdf

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The Master of the Lodge turns inward to face each other as they inquire about the position of the M.'s in the lodge. The I.P.M. states that as the sun rises in the east, opening and enlivening the day, the W.M. is placed in the lodge to open it and instruct the brethren in Freemasonry. The W.M. then declares the lodge open, asking the brethren to invoke the assistance of T.G.A.O.T.U. in all their endeavors. The lodge is now cut open for the purpose of Freemasonry in the first degree. The W.M. gives keys of the first degree to the S.W., who raises his column, and J.W. gives keys of the first degree and lowers his column. I.G. approaches the door, receives keys of the first degree from T, and returns to their place. During this time, S.D. assists J.D. in attending to the TB. I.P.M. then opens VSL and arranges S and Cs. The W.M. sits after which the brethren resume their seats. The ceremony of initiation now begins with T giving a report in the first degree on the candidate. I.G. advances towards the edge of the S.P., and gives Sp and Sn of the first degree to Bro. J.W. The process continues until Mr.... Cand.'s full name, a poor candidate in a state of darkness, is presented by T. I.G.: We help him through God's favor, he's free and in good standing. W.M.: His good reputation has already been heard, are you sure he's prepared? I.G.: I vouch for it, W.M. W.M.: Then let's admit him properly. I.G. cuts Sn. W.M. bangs his gavel, one k, which is answered by S.W. and J.W. Bro. Deacons. I.G. goes to the door with a Poniard, waiting for S.D., who joins J.D. while A.D.C. follows him to W. He puts J.D.'s Wand in position and takes post at his chair. The Deacons go to the door, I.G. opens it, and applies P to Cand.'s left breast. I.G.: Can you feel anything? After a positive response, J.D. takes control of Cand. by holding his right hand firmly, conducting him to the edge of S.P. while I.G. locks the door and raises Poniard above his head. S.D. positions himself at Cand's left, and I.G. returns to his seat. W.M.: Mr. ... Cand's full name, you have to be free and over 21 years old? Cand.: I am. W.M.: Since you've assured us, kneel (pause while Cand does so) or we'll cover you (Deacons assist Cand.) while the blessing of Heaven is invoked for our proceedings. W.M. bangs his gavel again, one k, which is answered by S.W. and J.W. All rise, and come to order with Sn of R. The Deacons stand slightly behind Cand, raising their Wands above his head. Prayer: Vouchsafe Your aid, Almighty Father... grant this Candidate for Freemasonry may dedicate and devote his life to Thy service... ALL: So mote it be. W.M.: Mr. ... Cand's full name, in all cases of difficulty and danger, whom do you put your trust? Cand.: In God (prompted by J.D. if necessary). W.M.: I'm glad to find your faith so well-founded; relying on such sure support, rise and safely follow your leader with a firm but humble confidence... where the name of God is invoked, we trust no danger will ensue. The Deacons lower their Wands and assist Cand. J.D. takes Cand. by right hand. W.M. calls the meeting to order as Brethren resume their seats. With the Gavel sounding three times, S.W. and J.W. acknowledge the notice. The W.M. then presents Mr. Cand.'s full name, a Candidate properly prepared to be made a Freemason. J.D. leads the procession around the Lodge, stopping at various stations while reciting the Sp and Sn of First Degree. At each stop, the W.M., S.W., and J.W. confer with one another before moving on. The ceremony concludes as J.D. presents Cand. to W.M. for initiation into Ancient Freemasonry. The candidate was to be questioned by the Worshipful Master, who would determine their suitability for Freemasonry. The candidate's name was given, and they were asked if they had made a voluntary decision to join without external influence. The candidate replied that they were only prompted by another brother if necessary. The Master then asked if they had a preconceived notion of the Institution's benefits and if they wished to serve others. Next, the candidate was instructed to advance to the East in due form, where they would be guided through the initiation ceremony. The Candidate carefully followed instructions, placing their feet together and taking three steps to reach the pedestal. Please find the rewritten text below: Men on their own, promises of loyalty are required; however, I assure you that these promises do not contradict your civic, moral, or religious duties. Are you willing to take a significant and formal commitment grounded in the principles I have outlined, to maintain confidentiality regarding the secrets and mysteries of our Order? (Cand.) (W.M.): Then, with J.D.'s guidance if needed, you will kneel on your left knee, place your right foot forming a square shape, and receive my right hand upon this sacred book, the V.S.L., while your left hand supports a pair of Compasses, one point directed at your bare left breast. Deacons assist Cand. (W.M.): I shall sound my Gavel once (k), which is answered by S.W. and J.W. The Brethren rise, and without taking a step back, all come to order with the Sound of Fellowship. Deacons standing behind Cand., raise their wands above his head in an arch formation. (Obligation from W.M. to Cand.): Recite your full name after me: "I, [Cand.'s full name], in the presence of T.G.A.O.T.U. and this worthy, worshipful, and warranted Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, regularly assembled and properly dedicated, of my own free will and accord, do hereby and hereon solemnly swear to always conceal, reveal, or communicate any part of the secrets or mysteries belonging to Free and Accepted Masons in Masonry, unless it be to a true and lawful Brother, or Brethren, after due trial, strict examination, or sure information from some well-known Brother that they are worthy of that confidence, within the body of a just, perfect, and regular Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons." I do solemnly promise that I have entered into this Worshipful Lodge without evasion, equivocation or mental reservation of any kind, knowing that a violation will brand me as a wilfully perjured individual void of moral worth and unfit to be received. So help me God and keep me steadfast in this Great and Solemn Obligation. My lips seal this promise, W.M. touches Cand.'s right hand which is the V. of the S.L. Cand. does so. Deacons then lower their Wands and all drop Sn of F. W.M.: Having been kept for a considerable time in a state of darkness, what in your present condition is the predominant wish of your heart? Cand., prompted by J.D.: Light. W.M.: Bro. J.D., let that blessing be restored to the Candidate. J.D. unties the knot of the hoodwink, W.M. raises his Gavel on high and points it right, left, right, and sounds his Gavel, one k, at which precise moment the Brethren close their eyes. J.D. then gently presses the head of Cand. slightly forward to direct his gaze to the T.G.Ls. W.M.: Now that you have been restored to the blessings of material light, I will direct your attention to what we consider the three Great though emblematical Lights in Freemasonry; they are the Volume of the Sacred Law, the Square, and the Compasses.; the Sacred Writings are to govern our faith, the Square to regulate our actions, and the Compasses. to keep us in due bounds with all mankind, particularly our Brethren in Freemasonry. W.M. takes Cand.'s right hand in his own. Rise, (or, Be uncovered,) duly obligated, Brother among Masons. Deacons assist Cand. W.M. sits and Brethren resume their seals J.D. conducts Cand. by a clockwise movement to right of W.M. and both stand facing S about three feet from him S.D., follows the J.D. round and returns to his seat. W.M.: You are now enabled to discover the three Lesser Lights in Freemasonry which are situated in the E, the S, and the W W.M. indicates with his hand the respective directions, and are meant to represent the Sun, the Moon, and the Master of the Lodge. I.G. advances slowly towards E, holding Poniard in his right hand, as a symbol of the dangers you faced upon entering this Lodge. By being meek and candid, you have avoided two great perils: stabbing and strangulation. If you had rushed forward, the Brother with Poniard would have pointed it at your chest, implying that any sudden movement would be fatal. W.M. replaces Poniard in its sheed, allowing I.G. to continue his slow advance. Meanwhile, J.D. lifts cable tow from Cand's shoulders and hands it to W.M., who demonstrates the running noose around the neck as a warning against retreat. Traditionally, there was also a physical penalty for improper disclosure of Freemasonry secrets, but this is now irrelevant as your Obligation is binding upon you forever. W.M. informs you that certain Degrees have unique secrets restricted to each and are conferred based on merit and ability. He will now entrust you with these secrets, including the marks that distinguish us from others. To confirm your identity as a Freemason, stand perfectly erect with your feet forming a Square and your body representing your mind. W.M.: Take a single step forward with your left foot, placing the heel of your right into its hollow. J.D. Take Sp and W.M.'s points to Cand's feet. That is the first regular step in Freemasonry. It's when secrets of the Degree are shared; they're about a Sign, Token, and Word. W.M. stands up, faces Cand, takes Sp, and says 'copy me'. The Sign involves putting your right hand with thumb out to form a Square by your left throat, quickly drawing it across, then dropping it aside. W.M. gives the Sign of First Degree and motions for J.D. and Cand to copy him. This action symbolizes the symbolic penalty of the Degree. It means that as an honorable man, someone would rather have their throat cut than share secrets improperly. W.M. repeats the Sign for J.D. and Cand to copy. He then gives them the Grip or Token by pressing his thumb on the first knuckle-joint of their right hand. J.D. places Cand's right hand in W.M.'s, ensuring that Cand's thumb is correctly positioned to receive the Grip. This shared pressure serves as a sign between brothers, day and night. It also requires a Word - a secret word highly valued among Freemasons for protecting their privileges. This Word should be given only by letters or syllables most of the time, except during certain periods. W.M. shares the Word 'Boaz' with Cand. After prompting from J.D., Cand repeats it. W.M. spells out the Word, and after being prompted again by J.D., Cand repeats the spelling. As part of the ceremony, Cand will be asked for this Word, so J.D. will guide him on how to respond. W.M. emphasizes the importance of not sharing the Grip or its demand without caution. When asked for the Word, Cand says he was taught to be careful but will share it in parts with W.M. The Word is derived from the left-hand pillar at King Solomon's Temple named after Boaz, a great-grandfather of David and a Prince in Israel. The meaning of this Word is 'In Strength'. After repeating it prompted by J.D., Cand is instructed to pass on the Word 'Boaz', indicating he has been fully initiated into Freemasonry. To advance to me as an E.A.F, I must show you, Sn. J.D., by demonstration, both giving Sp and Sn of First Degree, cutting Sn. J.W. to Cand.: Have you anything to communicate? Cand. (J.D. dictates): I have. J.W. rises and faces Cand, J.D. places Cand.'s right hand in that of J.W., Cand. gives G., J.D. guiding Cand.'s thumb to correct position. J.W.: What is this? Cand. (J.D. dictates): The Grip, or Token, of an E.A.F. J.W.: What does this Grip demand? Cand. (J.D. dictates): A Word. J.W.: Give me that Word. Cand. (J.D. dictates): At my Initiation I was taught to be cautious but I will letter or halve with you. J.W.: Letter it and you begin. J.D. dictates first letter and subsequent alternate letters, Cand. repeating appropriately, J.W. responding in turn with second letter and subsequent alternate letters. J.W.: Pass The Worshipful Master presented a new member with an Eastern Adept's badge as a symbol of their initiation into the fraternity. Brother [Last Name], you are now invested with this prestigious badge, which signifies innocence and brotherly love. By command of the Worshipful Master, I confer upon you this badge of honor, one that surpasses even the Golden Fleece and Roman Eagle in significance. Left foot across the lodge, right foot down the lodge, heel to heel to form a square. J.D. shows Cand by demonstration how to place feet correctly. Please pay attention to the W.M. Charge: it's customary to lay the first stone at the NE corner of any building. As a new brother, you're placed in the NE part of the lodge and asked to represent that stone. On this foundation, may you build something perfect and honorable. You now seem like a just and upright E.A.F., which is why I highly recommend continuing as such. I'll put your principles to the test by asking you to exercise charity, a key characteristic of Freemasonry. Charity has Heaven's and Earth's approval and blesses both those who give and receive. In a global society like ours, we have rich members but also many struggling with poverty. We usually appeal to our new brothers' charity by making an appeal that their circumstances allow. Whatever you feel disposed to give will be deposited in the Charity box for our Brother J.D., who will apply it faithfully. The Charity box is now being passed to J.D., who's taking a position opposite the W.M.'s pedestal. S.D. is taking their place at Cand's left side, showing the Charity box to Cand and asking if they have anything to give. He would have freely contributed. Cuts are made and Sn returns to the right of Cand. S.D. retakes his seat. The charity box is discreetly returned. W.M.: I commend your noble sentiments, as well as your inability to fulfill them at this time. Rest assured that this trial was not designed to toy with your emotions; we have no intention of causing you distress. It was conducted for three specific reasons: first, to test your principles; secondly, to demonstrate that you possess no metals or metal objects, thus the ceremony would need to be repeated; and thirdly, as a reminder that should you encounter a friend in need who asks for your aid, you will recall your own initiation into Freemasonry and seize the opportunity to practice virtue. W.M.: Please follow me. J.D. leads Cand. to the front of the pedestal, whereupon W.M. rises. W.M.: I now present to you the symbolic tools of an Entered Apprentice Fellowcraft; they are the 24-inch Gauge, the Common Gavel, and the Chisel. I.P.M. hands over the corresponding tool to W.M., who then shows each one to Cand. and places it on top of the pedestal. The 24-inch Gauge serves as a reminder to allocate time for prayer, labor, and serving others, while the Common Gavel represents the power of conscience that keeps vain thoughts at bay. The Chisel symbolizes the importance of education in preparing individuals for harmonious society. W.M.: As you proceed through this evening, you will be asked to pay certain fees for your initiation; it is only fitting that you understand Our warrant and charter are the foundation of our work. Here, the W.M. receives it from I.P.M., who has safeguarded it until now. You're free to inspect this document at any future lodge meeting. We also have a book of constitutions that outlines our rules and bylaws. These are essential for your understanding of the craft in general, as well as specific duties within our own lodge. Certain booklets recommended by Grand Lodge are available for your information. Now you may take a break to restore yourself before returning to focus on an important charge related to our institution's excellence and its members' qualifications. I congratulate you, Cand., on completing this first step in Freemasonry. Likewise, a Mason's generosity should only be limited by prudent consideration. Our lodges stand on sacred ground since the first lodge was consecrated due to three grand offerings made there, which met with divine approval. Our lodges face east and west because places of worship and regular, well-formed Masonic lodges are situated in this manner; we attribute three Masonic reasons for this practice. Firstly, the Sun, the Glory of the Lord, rises in the east and sets in the west; secondly, learning originated in the east and has spread its influence to the west; there is a third reason as well, but it's too lengthy to be presented here. Our lodges are supported by three great pillars: Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty; these represent Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hirim Abiff, who symbolize wisdom in construction, strength in support, and beauty in adornment. These attributes further embody the divine virtues of wisdom, strength, and beauty. However, since there are no noble architectural orders known as Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty, we refer them to the Ionic, Doric, and Corinthian styles instead. A Freemason's Lodge is covered by a celestial canopy of diverse colors, representing heaven itself. Our path to reaching this celestial realm is guided by Jacob's ladder, which consists of many rungs symbolizing moral virtues. The three primary ones are Faith, Hope, and Charity; Faith in the God of All, Hope for salvation, and charity towards all mankind. This ladder rests on the apex of the Square because the Holy Book teaches us to believe in divine providence, strengthening our faith and enabling us to ascend. This faith naturally creates hope, which enables us to ascend further, but true fulfillment is achieved through Charity, embracing the whole and making one a master of their profession. A mystical mansion, shrouded by the celestial canvas, is symbolically portrayed within our Lodges through seven twinkling stars, which allude to a similar number of accomplished Freemasons. No Lodge is deemed complete without this quota, nor can any aspirant be formally initiated into our fraternity without it. Within a Mason's sanctuary, three principal components converge: Ornaments, Furniture, and Jewels. Ornements comprise the Mosaic Pavement, the Blazing Star, and the Tesselated Border, representing respectively the floor, the central glory, and the bordering design of the Lodge. The Furniture consists of the Vice of the Senior Warden, the Companions, and the Swords, which guide our faith and govern our conduct. These symbols derive from God to humanity in general, while the Companions specifically belong to the Grand Master, and the Swords symbolize the collective Craft. Among the Jewels, three are movable and three immovable. The movable Jewels – the Square, Level, and Plumb Rule – serve both practical purposes, such as adjusting corners of buildings, laying levels, and proving horizontals, and possess a moral significance. They are worn by the Master and his Wardens and can be transferred to their successors during Installation ceremonies. The immovable Jewels – the Tracing Board, the Rough Ashlar, and the Perfect Ashlar – represent stages in a Mason's journey: designing on the Tracing Board, carving and marking on the Rough Ashlar, and refining on the Perfect Ashlar. In all well-formed Lodges, there exists an unerring point within a circle. This circle is bounded by parallel lines representing Moses and K.S., with the V of the Senior Warden's Level unfolding above it to support Jacob's ladder. As we navigate around this circle, we touch upon both lines, symbolically moving closer to truth and avoiding deception, guided by the principles of the Holy Book that these parallels embody. In the world of Freemasonry, parallel lines represent the path to enlightenment, where members keep themselves circumscribed by the principles of their craft. This self-restraint allows them to avoid errors and stay true to their values. The symbol Lewis, meaning strength, is depicted as metal pieces dovetailed into a stone, enabling Masons to lift great weights with ease while maintaining their footing. Additionally, Lewis represents the son of a Freemason, who must shoulder the responsibilities of his parents' later years and aid them in times of need. The four tassels adorning the corners of the Lodge serve as reminders of the four cardinal virtues: Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice. These values were consistently upheld by many ancient Freemasons. The essence of a good Freemason is Virtue, Honour, and Mercy; if these traits are absent from other societies, they will always be found in the heart of a true Mason. Ancient and honourable is the institution of Freemasonry, having endured for centuries and fostering a natural inclination towards moral and social virtues in its adherents. Its foundation is solid, built on principles that promote the practice of every noble quality. In fact, monarchs themselves have been known to participate in Masonic mysteries and join our gatherings. As a Freemason, I urge you to reflect deeply on the sacred text, considering it as the ultimate guide for truth and justice. Regulate your actions according to its divine precepts, which instruct us on our duties towards God, our fellow human beings, and ourselves. We begin by acknowledging our dependence on the Creator, never mentioning His name without a sense of awe and reverence. We seek His aid in our lawful pursuits and look to Him for comfort and support in times of need. To your neighbour, we act with integrity, rendering them every kindness that justice or mercy demands. We relieve their necessities, soothe their afflictions, and treat them as we would wish they treated us in similar circumstances. And to yourself, we strive to maintain a prudent and well-regulated course, preserving our physical and mental faculties in their full energy. This enables us to utilize the talents bestowed upon us by God for His glory and the benefit of humanity. As citizens of the world, we must be exemplary in our civic duties, never proposing or supporting any act that could undermine peace and social order. We pay due obedience to the laws of any state where we reside, while remembering our allegiance to our native land. This attachment is implanted within us by nature, binding us to the country of our birth. As individuals, we are further encouraged to cultivate every domestic and public virtue, guided by prudence and wisdom. Fortitude will correct you, but Justice will guide all your actions. Be careful to keep Masonic ornaments like Benevolence and Charity fully visible. As a Freemason, pay attention to additional qualities such as Secrecy, Fidelity, and Obedience. Maintain secrecy by not disclosing Masonic secrets, and be faithful by following the fraternity's laws and regulations. Demonstrate obedience by respecting the order's rituals, attending meetings, and submitting to the Worshipful Master and his Wardens. Brother J.W. asks what is the constant care of every Freemason? Brother I.G. advances on to edge of S.P. and gives Sp. and Sn of First Degree, proving the Lodge close T. Brother J.W. cuts Sn., goes to the door and gives ks of First Degree. T. answers with similar ks. Brother I.G. advances on to edge of S P and gives Sp. and Sn of First Degree. Brother J.W., the Lodge is close T. cuts Sn and returns to his place. J .W. gives ks., Sp and Sn of First Degree: W.M., the Lodge is close T. cuts Sn. W.M.: Bro. S.W. who gives Sp and Sn of First Degree, the next care? Brother S.W.: To see that the Brethren appear to order as Freemasons cuts Sn. W.M.: To order, Brethren, as Freemasons. All come to order with Sp and Sn of First Degree. W.M.: Bro. S.W., your constant situation in the Lodge? Brother S.W.: In the W, W.M. W.M.: Why are you placed there? Brother S.W.: As the Sun sets in the W to close the day, so is the S.W. placed in the W to close the Lodge, by command of the W.M., having seen that every Brother has had his due. W.M.: Brethren, before the Lodge is closed, the following words may be spoken by the Chaplain let us with all reverence and humility express our gratitude to T.G.A.O.T.U. for favours already received; may He continue to preserve the Order by cementing and adorning it with every moral and social virtue. ALL: So mote it be. W.M.: Bro. S.W., the labours of the evening being ended, you have my command to close the Lodge. Holds Sn. and with his l.h. gives ks. of First Degree. Brother S.W.: Brethren, in the name of T.G.A.O.T.U. and by command of the W.M., I close the Lodge. All cut Sn., S.W. gives ks. of First Degree and lowers his Column. J.W.: And it is closed accordingly until emergencies excepted, of which due notice will be given. Gives ks. of First Degree and leaves his Column lowered. I.G. goes to the door, gives ks of First Degree and being answered similarly by T, returns to his place. During which time the S.D., assisted by the J.D., attends to the TB and both return to their places. I.P.M. closes V.S.L., arranges S. and Cs., replaces the Working Tools and returns to his place. I.P.M.: Brethren, you are now about to quit this safe retreat of peace and friendship and mix again with the busy world; amidst all its cares and employments, forget not those sacred duties which have been so frequently inculcated and so strongly recommended in this Lodge. Be ye therefore discreet, prudent, and temperate; remember that at this pedestal Have solemnly and voluntarily vowed to relieve and befriend every Brother in need with unhesitating cordiality; promised to remind him of his failings gently and aid his character when wrongfully traduced. Suggest the most candid and favourable circumstances, even when conduct is justly liable to reprehension. This will show how dearly Freemasons love each other. My Brethren, extend these noble sentiments further by being kind to all human creatures; particularly those in need, for they have a just claim on your kindness. I trust you'll be good to everyone and excel at your vocations through diligence, liberal beneficence, constancy, sincerity, and virtuous deportment. Prove the world the happy effects of our Institution by living in peace. Be of one mind, live in peace, and may God of Love delight amongst you. Finally, lock secrets in a safe repository, unite in Fidelity, and coincide with "Fidelity" three times, while repeating the ward "Fidelity."